

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 2596

EXDIS

FOR EAGLEBURGER AND ROGERS ONLY

EO 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: OPERATION CLEAN SLATE - 2

1. LEVEL OR REPRESENTATION: WHILE NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO ORGANIZATION BUT WOULD AFFECT IT IN A NUMBER OF WAYS, I WOULD SUGGEST REDUCING IN SOME MANNER THE LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION IN JAMAICA IN THE REASONABLY IMMEDIATE FUTURE. MY PROXIMATE REASONS ARE PRIMARILY POLITICAL, COUPLED WITH THE APPARENT UNWILLINGNESS OF THE JAMAICANS TO NAME AN AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON BEFORE PERHAPS NEXT YEAR. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE ARE ALSO COGEN SUBSTANTIVE ARGUMENTS

2. I RECOGNIZE MANY OF THE PROBLEMS BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL, AND THE SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES OF TRANSITION, BUT IT HAS LONG SEEMED TO ME THAT THE UNIVERSAL TREND OF TRYING TO FLATTER OUR HOSTS, KEEP UP WITH THE JONESES, MAKE EXTRA TOP-RANK SLOTS ETC., HAVE CHEAPENED THE AMBASSADORIAL COIN IMMEASURABLY, ADDED TO THE COST OF REPRESENTATION, AND WAKENED U.S. PRESTIGE IN GENERAL. THE PROLIFERATION OF MINI-STATES ESPECIALLY IN THE CARIBBEAN AND AFRICA, IN WHICH THE U.S. HAS NO MAJOR INTERESTES, HAS POINTED UP THE PROBLEM. MANY OF THEM COULD BE ADEQUATELY SERVED BY

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A COMPETENT CONSUL-GENERAL AND OTHERS BY A CHARGE.

THERE MIGHT EVEN BE A GOOD CASE MADE FOR A REVIVAL OF THE TRADITIONAL LEGATION WITH A MINISTER IN CHARGE. THE PRESTIGE OF A U.S. ENVOY DERIVES FROM THE COUNTRY FROM WHICH HE IS ACCREDITED AND NOT UPON HIS NOMINAL RANK. IT FURTHER DEPENDS ON HIS CAPABILITY, AND SMALL POSTS, ESPECIALLY ENGLISH-SPEAKING, ARE SOMETIMES SLOTS FOR INEXPERIENCED POLITICAL APPOINTEES SIMPLY BECAUSE OF THE AMBASSADORIAL HANDLE. A BENEFICIAL FALL-OUT MIGHT BE THE WEAKENING OF THE CHIEF OF MISSION'S LICENSE TO OPERATE ON PERSONAL WHIM BECAUSE OF THE DEFERENCE PAID TO THE AMBASSADORIAL RANK, REGARDLESS OF COUNTRY OF APPOINTMENT, WITH CONSEQUENT BENEFITS AT POSTS AND TO THE DEPARTMENT

3. JAMAICA IS PERHAPS A MARGINAL CASE, AND IT MIGHT BE RETAINED AS AN EMBASSY IF THE AMBASSADOR, SIMILAR TO THE PATTERN OF MANY OTHER COUNTRIES, WERE ACCREDITED ELSEWHERE AS WELL. OTHERWISE, I AM SATISFIED THAT A MINISTER OR PERMANENT CHARGE WOULD BE ADEQUATE, MORE IN KEEPING WITH THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE COUNTRY TO US, THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE POST, AND THE RESOURCES DEVOTED TO IT. IT WOULD ALSO DESIRABLY LOWER OUR PROFILE AND GIVE THE JAMAICANS LESS OF AN INCENTIVE TO PLASTER A CONSPICUOUS TARGET, SOMETIME JUST BECAUSE IT'S THERE.

4. IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY OTHER CRITERIA, POPULATION COULD BE USED AS AN INDEX. SURELY IT MAKES LITTLE SENSE TO ACCREDIT AMBASSADORS TO COUNTRIES WITH POPULATIONS COMPARABLE TO SOME OF OUR LESS POPULOUS STATES. SOME CURB MUST BE PLACED ON UNBRIDLED AND UNVIABLE SOVEREIGNTY OF ONLY THEORETICALLY EQUALITY, AND OUR OWN RECOGNITION OF INEQUALITY OF INTERESTS WOULD BE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. GERARD

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